

March 13, 2018

Dear Co-Chair Doyle, Co-Chair Kissel, Co-Chair Tong, Vice Chair Winfield, Vice Chair McLachlan, Vice Chair Stafstrom, Ranking Member Rebimbas, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Please accept this public hearing testimony in SUPPORT of HB 5469, An Act Concerning Bear Hunting.

The recent tragic poaching of two beloved Wilton bears highlights the cruelty of trophy hunting. These two bears were beloved by area residents who had appreciated viewing them from a distance.

Connecticut's small bear population needs protection. Over the years, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has made no effort to increase poaching penalties, keeping them unacceptably weak (currently, poaching is only a Class C misdemeanor). This bill is a step in the right direction. DEEP has also been aggressively pursuing a bear trophy hunting agenda, which I vigorously oppose.

We need to live in harmony with nature, not destroy it for a "so called" sport.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

Lori Nicholson

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